

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 200805

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 200805

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FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, EG, US

SUBJECT: QATTARA DEPRESSION PROJECT: ABAZA'S PROPOSED

VISIT TO NEVADA TEST SITES

REF: CAIRO 8689, CAIRO 3882

1. WE HAVE BEEN TRYING SINCE RECEIPT CAIRO 3882 TO OBTAIN  
CLEARED USG RESPONSE TO REQUEST BY MIN ELECTRICITY UNDER  
SECRETARY MAHER ABAZA TO VISIT NEVADA NUCLEAR TEST SITES.  
STATE AND ACDA BELIEVE SUCH VISIT BY SENIOR GOE OFFICIAL  
CONCERNED WITH NUCLEAR MATTERS COULD BE MISINTERPRETED TO  
DETRIMENT OF BEST INTERESTS OF EGYPT AND OF U.S. THERE IS  
NO RPT NO INFORMATION ABAZA COULD OBTAIN BY PHYSICALLY  
VISITING TEST SITES THAT HE COULD NOT EQUALLY OBTAIN FROM  
PROGRAM WHICH COULD BE ARRANGED FOR HIM AT ERDA HEAD-  
QUARTERS IN WASHINGTON AREA. AS STATE 175298 INDICATES,  
WE REMAIN CONCERNED THAT PARTICIPATION OF U.S. ADVISORS  
IN QATTARA DEPRESSION PROJECT FEASIBILITY STUDY NOT RPT  
NOT GIVE WRONG SIGNAL TO GOE. VISIT TO NEVADA TEST SITE  
BY ABAZA, DESPITE OUR AND HIS DISCLAIMERS, MIGHT STILL BE  
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PAGE 02 STATE 200805

MISINTERPRETED BY SOME OFFICIALS IN GOE.

2. WITH INITIALING OF EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI NUCLEAR REACTOR AGREEMENTS LAST WEEK, WE ARE EVEN MORE SENSITIVE TO POSSIBILITY THAT ANY TRIP BY ABAZA TO SUCH LOCATION AS NEVADA TEST SITES COULD BE EXPLOITED TO DETRIMENT OF EGYPT'S BEST INTERESTS HERE. EVEN THOUGH THREE EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS VISITED TEST SITES YEAR AGO, THEY DID NOT HAVE ABAZA'S HIGH SILHOUETTE IN NUCLEAR MATTERS AND VISIT YEAR AGO WAS YEAR AGO, NOT RPT NOT TODAY.

3. ERDA AT ASSISTANT DIRECTOR LEVEL CONTINUES TO BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT ABAZA SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO VISIT TEST SITES AND IT HAS STEADFASTLY REFUSED TO CLEAR CABLE WHICH WOULD DISAPPROVE ABAZA REQUEST. WE DO NOT BELIEVE OBTAINING EARLY DECISION ON THIS ISSUE MERITS TAKING IT TO SENIOR LEVELS IN ERDA OR STATE.

4. YOU MAY WISH TO ADVISE ABAZA THAT HE WOULD BE WARMLY WELCOMED SHOULD HE VISIT WASHINGTON BY ERDA AND OTHERS CONCERNED WITH HIS AREA OF INTEREST, BUT THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THAT HIS REQUEST TO VISIT NEVADA TEST SITES HAS NOT BEEN, AND IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE, APPROVED IN NEAR FUTURE.

5. THERE MAY BE OTHER POLITICAL FACTORS IN EGYPT THAT WE HAVE NOT TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN COMING TO OUR VIEW THAT ON BALANCE IT WOULD BE BEST IF ABAZA DEFERRED HIS VISIT TO NEVADA TEST SITE AT THIS TIME. WE ALSO WOULD APPRECIATE CONFIRMATION THAT TURN DOWN OF VISIT BY ABAZA TO NEVADA WILL NOT RAISE DIFFICULT PROBLEMS FOR YOU, E.G., ESCALATING THIS MATTER TO A HIGHER, POLITICAL LEVEL. WE WILL BE GRATEFUL THEREFORE FOR YOUR VIEWS.

6. PLEASE SLUG YOUR REPLY NEA ONLY.

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## Message Attributes

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